

IN THE CLAIMS:

All claim amendments and cancellations are made without prejudice or disclaimer.
Please amend the claims as follows:

1. (Currently Amended) An isolated, recombinant or purified peptide comprising at least one string of at least 12 consecutive amino acids from ~~(SEQ SEQ ID NO: 11)~~, 11, wherein said isolated, recombinant or purified peptide has IL-6 antagonistic activity as determined by a bioassay ~~for determining IL-6 antagonistic activity, and said bioassay comprising contacting IL-6-dependent B9 cells with said isolated, recombinant or purified peptide and determining an a~~ decreased proliferative effect of said isolated, recombinant or purified peptide on IL-6 stimulation of said IL-6-dependent B9 cells.

2-3. (Canceled)

4. (Previously Presented) The isolated, recombinant or purified peptide of claim 1 of 12-20 amino acids.

5. (Previously Presented) The isolated, recombinant or purified peptide of claim 1 of 12 amino acids.

6 and 7. (Canceled)

8. (Currently Amended) A peptide composition, wherein at least two isolated, recombinant or purified peptides of claim 1 are chemically linked directly or via spacer molecules to one another.

9. (Previously Presented) The peptide composition of claim 8, wherein the at least two chemically linked peptides are linked with lysine.

10. (Withdrawn) A peptide composition wherein at least two peptides according to claim 1 having at least one string of 5 consecutive amino acids long in common with the amino acid sequence RYILDGISALRK (SEQ. ID. NO.: 1) are linked with lysine.

11. (Previously Presented) The peptide composition of claim 8, wherein at least four isolated, recombinant or purified peptides are linked with branching oligolysines.

12. (Currently Amended) A mixture comprising a plurality of dissimilar ~~the~~ isolated, recombinant or purified ~~peptide~~ peptides of claim 1.

13-14. (Canceled)

15. (Currently Amended) A ~~preparation~~ composition comprising:
the isolated, recombinant or purified peptide of claim 1, together with an inert carrier.

16-18. (Canceled)

19. (Withdrawn) A method for exerting agonistic IL-6 activity at concentrations that are relatively equivalent to 7.5 to 120 $\mu\text{g/ml}$ using a peptide according to claim 7.

20. (Canceled)

21. (Currently Amended) A method for culturing mammalian cells, the method comprising:
~~incubating or culturing said~~ mammalian cells in a medium comprising; and
~~contacting said cells, or the medium wherein said cells are incubated or cultured, with the~~
isolated, recombinant or purified peptide of claim 1.

22-46. (Canceled)

47. (Withdrawn) A method for manufacturing a pharmaceutical preparation according to claim 7 for topical or intra-mammary application.

48-71. (Canceled)

72. (Previously Presented) The peptide composition of claim 9, wherein the at least two linked peptides are linked with branching oligolysines.

73. (Withdrawn) The peptide composition of claim 10 wherein at least four peptides are linked with branching oligolysines.

74. (Canceled)

75. (Currently Amended) A mixture composition comprising the plurality of isolated, recombinant or purified peptide peptides composition of claim 8, 12, together with an inert carrier.

76. (Withdrawn) An antibody specifically directed against the isolated, recombinant peptide of claim 1.

77. (Withdrawn) An antibody specifically directed against the peptide composition of claim 8.

78. (Currently Amended) A composition—~~comprising~~ comprising the peptide composition of claim 8; 8 and an inert carrier.

79. (Withdrawn) A pharmaceutical preparation comprising the antibody of claim 76, together with at least one suitable excipient for administration.

80. (Withdrawn) A pharmaceutical preparation comprising the antibody of claim 77, together with at least one suitable excipient for administration.

81. (Canceled)

82. (Withdrawn) A method for clearing extra-corporeal blood or blood products from IL-6 or IL-6 receptor molecules comprising contacting said blood or blood product with the antibody of claim 76.

83. (Withdrawn) A method for clearing extra-corporeal blood or blood products from IL-6 or IL-6 receptor molecules comprising contacting said blood or blood product with the antibody of claim 77.

84. (Withdrawn) A method for treating or preventing an IL-6 related disease in a subject comprising administering to the subject the pharmaceutical preparation of claim 79.

85. (Withdrawn) A method for treating or preventing an IL-6 related disease in a subject comprising administering to the subject the pharmaceutical preparation of claim 80.

86. (Canceled)